

ADOPTING AND AUTHORIZING THE IMPROVEMENT OF ROCKLAND HARBOR, MAINE

JUNE 14, 1956.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State
of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. BLATNIK, from the Committee on Public Works, submitted the
following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 1749]

The Committee on Public Works, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1749) adopting and authorizing the improvement of Rockland Harbor, Maine, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE BILL

S. 1749 would authorize modification of the existing project for Rockland Harbor, Maine, in accordance with recommendations of the Chief of Engineers, Department of the Army, as set forth in Senate Document No. 82, 84th Congress, at an estimated cost of \$710,000.

GENERAL STATEMENT

Rockland Harbor is located just inside the southwestern entrance to Penobscot Bay about 75 miles northeast of Portland, Maine.

The existing project provides for a riprap breakwater extending 4,346 feet southerly from Jameson Point, dredging the inner harbor to depths ranging from 4 to 13 feet at low tide, and removing 2 groups of ledges, 1 to 22 feet and the other to 14 feet. The project has been completed at costs to the United States to June 30, 1954, of \$916,000 for new work and \$78,000 for maintenance. The estimated annual cost of maintenance is \$1,500. Local interests have dredged approach channels to the wharves and completed considerable work in the harbor.

The Corps of Engineers recommends modification of the existing project to provide for construction of a short approach channel and

3 branch channels each with a turning basin, extending from deep water along about 1.5 miles of the central and northern waterfront to depths of 18 feet below mean low water in the outer portion and 14 feet in the inner portion with widths of 150 feet and 100 feet; and a channel 18 feet deep and 100 feet wide from deep water to an existing marine base in the southern part of the harbor.

The estimated Federal costs of the improvement are \$710,000 for construction and \$2,900 annually for maintenance in addition to that now required.

The improvements are recommended subject to the provision that local interests will provide without cost to the United States all lands, easements, and rights-of-way necessary for construction of the project and its subsequent maintenance, hold and save the United States free from damages due to the construction and maintenance of the project; provide and maintain at local expense adequate public transfer and terminal facilities open to all on equal terms; and contribute in cash 50 percent of the Federal cost of construction of the 18-foot channel to the marine base, currently estimated at \$20,000.

Rockland, Maine, with a population of 9,234 in 1950, is the principal port and commercial center serving a district with a population in excess of 34,000. Rockland is the third largest fishing port in New England. Its principal industrial activity is the handling of fish, shellfish, and fish products, and is a center for fish packing, processing, and canning. It is the mainland terminus for ship lines serving the Penobscot Bay island communities. The waterborne commerce of Rockland Harbor is in excess of 100,000 tons annually.

Improvement of the Rockland Harbor is needed to accommodate larger deep-draft vessels. Some of these vessels cannot use the present harbor due to the shallow depths, while others are delayed waiting for favorable tides. Wharves have been damaged from exposure to storms. Local interests plan to make extensive improvements in the harbor for use of the freight, passenger, and fishing vessels. The benefit-cost ratio of the overall project is 2.27.

The committee is advised that Rockland Harbor has been extensively developed, largely at the expense of local interests. About 20 wharves are in active use at the present time, extending along 15,000 feet of developed water frontage, with depths ranging from nothing to 15 feet at low tide. One general cargo wharf was purchased by the United States during the last war and is now used exclusively by the United States Coast Guard.

Local interests have indicated that the practice of navigating the harbor only at high tide is a severe economic handicap to the fishing and commercial activities of the port.

The committee believes that improvement of Rockland Harbor is necessary for the accommodation of present-day traffic, and recommends enactment of S. 1749.

